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ABSTRACT

Noting that parents are vital partners in the educational system, this handbook provides parents with information about the Grade 6 curriculum in Alberta, Canada. Based on the Alberta Learning "Programs of Study: Elementary Schools," the handbook describes the knowledge, skills, and attitudes students in Alberta are expected to demonstrate upon completion of the Grade 6 curriculum. Following introductory material that includes information on Aboriginal education, supports for learning, and assessment, the handbook's sections are: (1) "Overview of Grade 6"; (2) "English Language Arts"; (3) "Mathematics"; (4) "Science"; (5) "Social Studies"; (6) "Information and Communication Technology"; (7) "Physical Education"; (8) "Health and Life Skills"; (9) "Art and Music"; (10) "Drama"; and (11) "Languages Other Than English." Each section includes samples of what students are expected to learn in each subject. The handbook concludes with a one-page questionnaire requesting feedback on the handbook. (HTH)

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ED 481 165

Curriculum Handbook for Parents

2003–2004

GRADE SIX

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Fax: 780–422–9750
Internet: http://www.lrc.learning.gov.ab.ca

Telephone numbers of branches referred to in this handbook can be reached, toll free inside Alberta, by dialing 310–0000.

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Telephone: 780–415–9300
Fax: 780–415–9306
E-mail: asb@gov.ab.ca

Curriculum Branch
Telephone: 780–427–2984
Fax: 780–422–3745
E-mail: curric.contact@learning.gov.ab.ca

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Telephone: 780–427–2940
Fax: 780–422–1947
E-mail: LSB@learning.gov.ab.ca

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Curriculum Handbook *for* **Parents**

2003–2004

GRADE **6**

This Curriculum Handbook provides parents with information about the Grade 6 curriculum. It includes:

- selected learning outcomes for each subject area from the provincial curriculum
- links to the Alberta Learning Web site where more information can be found
- a feedback form.

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Message from the
Minister of Learning

Excellence in education is of primary importance to Albertans. Parents, students, teachers and community members have demonstrated their passion for maintaining our outstanding education system for the benefit of today's students and future generations.

The Government of Alberta is committed to continuing to provide Alberta's students with a first-class education. One of the many ways of ensuring Alberta's students succeed in our global community is through our high quality curriculum. Alberta's curriculum is innovative and responsive to the learning needs of students. It ensures that students have the opportunity to acquire the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to be self-reliant, responsible, caring and contributing members of society.

As a parent, you play a vital role in the education of your child. When you know what your child is learning in school, you are able to reinforce that learning at home. In order to help support parents in this process, Alberta Learning has published the *Curriculum Handbook for Parents* series. As partners in education, this resource provides you with valuable information about the learning goals that have been set for students. I encourage you to discuss the contents of the *Curriculum Handbook for Parents* with your child's teacher, who can provide further information and guidance.

It is vital that all partners in education—including parents, teachers, principals, superintendents, trustees and other members of our community—work collaboratively to ensure we continually meet the needs of students in our ever-changing world. Together, we can continue to ensure that every student has a solid foundation from which to learn, grow and succeed.

Dr. Lyle Oberg
Minister of Learning

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Information for Parents

Web site links for further information are provided throughout the handbook.

Students learn in a variety of environments—in their homes, schools and communities. Parents, teachers and community members form a partnership to assist this learning.

When parents know what children are studying at school, they can provide better home support for their children's learning. The *Curriculum Handbooks for Parents* have been designed to assist parents in participating in their child's education by fostering an understanding of what students learn at each grade level.

Schooling in Alberta

Schools provide students with a broad educational program that helps them:

- develop knowledge, skills and attitudes in a variety of subject areas
- demonstrate critical and creative thinking skills in problem solving and decision making
- demonstrate competence in using information technologies
- know how to learn and work independently and as part of a team
- develop desirable personal characteristics and the ability to make ethical decisions
- demonstrate initiative, leadership, flexibility and persistence
- have the desire and realize the need for lifelong learning.

Schools also prepare students to make positive contributions to society through communities, the workplace and/or post-secondary studies.

Teachers make a number of decisions when planning for classroom instruction. Within any group of students, there is a range of individual differences. Teachers use the learning outcomes of the provincial curriculum to meet the needs and interests of their students and to make connections across subject areas. They choose resources, equipment and materials to help students achieve the learning outcomes. Teaching methods and schedules vary from school to school and from class to class to meet the diverse learning needs of students.

Alberta Learning assists teachers by reviewing and selecting the best possible resources, such as textbooks, videotapes and computer software, for all subject areas. Authorization of resources by Alberta Learning indicates that the resources meet high standards and can help students achieve the learning outcomes. Teachers can choose other resources, as long as they follow school board policy.

http://www.lrc.learning.gov.ab.ca

Authorized resources are available for purchase from the Learning Resources Centre (LRC).

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Helping Your Child at Home

Here are some important pointers for you to help your child learn.

- Be positive and encouraging in your approach to learning. It will help your child feel confident and enthusiastic about success.
- Talk to your child about schoolwork, and help with homework when you can.
- Help your child set realistic goals, and discuss progress in an encouraging way.
- Connect your child's schoolwork with everyday life, and use these opportunities for problem solving in everyday situations.
- Keep in touch with teachers about your child's progress, including successes and achievements, not just concerns.

The following resources may help you. Check your child's school for availability.

http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/parents/mathprbk.pdf

- *The Parent Advantage*—Tips and strategies for helping with homework in grades 1 through 9.

http://www.learnalberta.ca

- *Working Together in Mathematics Education*—Ways parents can support student learning in mathematics.

http://www.2learn.ca/

- *LearnAlberta.ca* Web site—Online multimedia learning resources that directly relate to the Alberta programs of study.
- *TELUS 2Learn* Web site—An education–business partnership that provides Internet inservice, support and information for Alberta teachers, students and parents.

School Councils

http://www.ahsca.ab.ca

Schools, parents and communities all play an important role in education. School councils are designed to give parents, students, teachers and other community members meaningful involvement in decisions about policies, programs and services and the allocation of funds to support them within their schools. Each school council determines its own level of involvement, depending on local needs. Parents can get more information on how to get involved by contacting their local school or the Alberta Home and School Councils Association (AHSCA).

School Fees and Fundraising

http://www.asba.ab.ca/policy_advisories_fund.html

Decisions regarding school fees and fundraising are made by the local board or by the school principal in consultation with the school council within policy guidelines established by the school board. In September 2000, the Alberta School Boards Association (ASBA) developed and provided guidelines to school boards to assist boards in establishing appropriate local policy.

School Fees

http://www.asba.ab.ca/policy_advisories_fees.html

A primary objective is to ensure that fees are not being charged for core items. Fees may be charged for supplies and materials provided for the student's personal use or consumption; this may include such things as calculators, locker rentals, student planners and computer diskettes. The fees charged are on a cost recovery basis.

Local policies may include a provision to waive fees or extend payment allowances where parents are experiencing financial difficulties.

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Fundraising

The guidelines state fundraising should not be done for core items such as textbooks. Some fundraising is appropriate for things like athletics uniforms, field trips, and other extras that staff and parents want for their schools. Participation in fundraising activities should be voluntary. No student should be excluded from an event or program because the parents did not contribute.

Alternative Programs

Choice is one of the important principles Alberta's education system is built on. When it comes to selecting a school, parents and students can choose from a wide range of options. They can select from public schools, Catholic schools, Francophone schools, private schools, and charter schools. They can also access a number of unique and innovative programs—including virtual schools. Parents can also opt to home school their children.

Information about Curriculum

Alberta has one of the best education systems in the world. One of the many reasons is a centralized, high quality curriculum that outlines what students are expected to learn and be able to do, in all subjects and grades. Alberta's curriculum is designed to help students achieve their individual potential and create a positive future for themselves, their families and their communities.

Accessing Information

Parents can access information about the curriculum and learning resources in a number of ways:

- Contact teachers or school administrators.
- **Curriculum Handbooks** contain selected outcomes for each subject area from the Alberta programs of study. They provide a more detailed picture of each year. This Curriculum Handbook is one of a set from Kindergarten to senior high school produced in general and Catholic versions, and in French. They are available on the Alberta Learning Web site or for purchase from the LRC.

http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/k_12/curriculum/parent.asp

- **Curriculum Summaries** for each grade level provide a brief overview of each year. The summaries are available on the Alberta Learning Web site.

http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/k_12/curriculum/parent.asp

- In Alberta, the provincial curriculum is organized into **Programs of Study**. They contain learning outcomes for each subject area from Kindergarten to Grade 12. They are legal documents that outline why the educational program is offered, what students are expected to learn and the basic principles about how students are to achieve the required knowledge, skills and attitudes. School jurisdictions use the *Programs of Study* to ensure that students meet provincial standards of achievement. However, they have flexibility to decide how to teach the curriculum and the order in which it is taught. They are available on the Alberta Learning Web site or for purchase from the LRC.

http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/k_12/curriculum/bySubject/

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http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/lrdb

- The Authorized Resources Database on the Alberta Learning Web site lists **Alberta authorized student and teacher resources**, most of which are available for purchase from the LRC.

http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca

- The **Alberta Learning Web site** contains information on learning from the early years to adulthood.

Curriculum Content—Deciding What Students Should Learn

The Alberta curriculum strives to:

- reflect the essential knowledge, skills and attitudes that Alberta students need to be well prepared for future learning and the world of work
- anticipate and plan for the needs of the future by considering the changes and developments in society such as trends in employment, globalization and advances in technology
- incorporate values of good citizenship and respect for different languages and cultures
- consider students' needs and abilities—intellectual, social, emotional and physical—at different ages and stages of growth
- ensure that each grade provides a foundation of knowledge for successful learning in subsequent years
- incorporate new discoveries and theories that are generally accepted by experts in subject areas
- develop skills that are necessary for success in learning a subject
- consider new research on proven teaching methods and how students learn best
- reflect the most appropriate level at which the skills are to be acquired
- integrate how the study of a subject contributes to student personal growth and development
- accommodate learning in different environments
- consider various ways of delivering a program to students, including new technologies and use of community resources such as distance learning and workplace learning.

Curriculum Development—Who Is Involved in the Process?

Alberta Learning takes a lead role in developing and revising provincial curriculum. However, many others, including teachers, principals, parents, education experts, post-secondary institutions and community members, play a vital role in the process. Input from various stakeholders ensures that curriculum continually meets the needs of students and that there are smooth transitions from grade to grade and to post-secondary education and the world of work.

Ensuring Curriculum Is Current

Curriculum must provide students with the knowledge and skills needed for the present and future. It is reviewed regularly and changes are made to keep it current and relevant. Curriculum revisions occur only after extensive consultations with education stakeholders.

Alberta Learning plans any curriculum changes well in advance to minimize any impact on schools, teachers and students. This ensures that school jurisdictions have sufficient time to prepare for the changes and purchase any needed resources.

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Revising Curriculum

If it is determined through the regular review process that there is a need to make minor or major revisions to a subject area in the curriculum, education stakeholders play a major role in the process. Alberta Learning conducts initial consultations and prepares a draft *Program of Studies* for that subject area. The draft is shared with a wide variety of education stakeholders through advisory committees, online feedback forms, conferences and presentations to teacher specialist councils. Teachers play a vital role in the process. They use their practical knowledge about a subject and about students' needs at specific age levels to provide input and feedback during the process.

Implementing Curriculum

The draft *Program of Studies*, developed in consultation with education stakeholders, is referred to the Minister of Learning for approval. Once approved, school jurisdictions take primary responsibility for curriculum implementation. Schools may have the opportunity to pilot the program for one year prior to full provincial implementation. This transition year gives schools time to prepare for the new curriculum. When a curriculum is implemented province-wide, all schools must teach the new curriculum.

Alberta Learning supports school jurisdictions by producing teacher resources that provide ideas for lesson planning, instructional strategies and student assessment. Also, it provides orientation for school jurisdiction leaders and lead teachers about curriculum changes and shares updates at professional conferences and in-services.

Professional development funds are provided to six Alberta Regional Professional Development Consortia. Each Regional Consortia organizes and provides activities to respond to in-service needs identified locally. This may include information and orientation sessions related to curriculum revisions.

Alberta Learning also provides funding to help schools purchase learning and teaching resources through the Learning Resources Centre. These resources are designed specifically to support the provincial curriculum.

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Aboriginal Education

Aboriginal peoples throughout the province have indicated that they want their children to complete regular school requirements and achieve the same standards as set for all students in Alberta.

http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/k_12/curriculum/bySubject/aborigin/default.asp

The term "Aboriginal" refers to First Nations, Métis and Inuit. To support the learning of Aboriginal students, schools are encouraged to use learning resources that give attention to Aboriginal heritage perspectives. In addition, all students in Alberta should understand and be aware of Aboriginal cultures, lifestyles and heritage. Student and teacher resources have been developed by Alberta Learning to assist teachers.

Both provincially and locally authorized Blackfoot and Cree language and culture courses are offered in the province.

http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/k_12/specialneeds/teacherresourcescat.pdf

As well, *A Handbook for Aboriginal Parents of Children with Special Needs* provides information to assist Aboriginal parents in working with schools to meet the special needs of their children. This resource is available for purchase from the LRC.

Our Treasured Children is a videotape that complements *A Handbook for Aboriginal Parents of Children with Special Needs*. It highlights intergenerational stories from members of the Aboriginal community. The videotape is available for purchase from the LRC.

Personal and Career Development

Preparing for life and work is a complex process that begins in the early years of schooling and continues throughout our lives. Alberta schools are taking an active role—along with parents and the community—in helping students move successfully from basic education to further studies and the workplace.

In the elementary grades, students explore their personal interests and values, and learn about different roles and career areas. They also begin to develop life skills, such as cooperating with others and being reliable.

Personal and career development activities and outcomes are integrated into all elementary courses and programs. In particular, the elementary health program focuses specifically on these topics.

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Supports for Learning

In every classroom and every school, students have individual needs. Teachers ensure that all students are involved in activities that help them build on their own level of learning.

Alberta students learn in a variety of ways—in schools, in the community, in small and large groups, and independently. Schools, supported by Alberta Learning, provide a variety of programs and services.

English as a Second Language

http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/k_12/curriculum/bySubject/ESL/default.asp

Many children born in Canada have a first language other than English, and many students move here from non-English speaking countries. Schools provide additional assistance for English as a Second Language (ESL) students in Grade 1 to Grade 12. This helps them acquire sufficient fluency in English so they can integrate into the regular classroom as quickly as possible.

Special Needs

http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/k_12/specialneeds/

The *School Act* specifies that school boards are responsible for determining if a child is in need of a special education program. Children with special needs, including those with mild, moderate and severe disabilities, and those who are gifted and talented, require specialized learning opportunities in order to receive an education that is consistent with their identified learning needs. School boards must provide programming for all school-age children, including children with special needs, who live in their district.

Children with special needs may require changes to: instruction, assessment strategies, materials and resources, classroom environment, equipment and/or the regular curriculum. In addition, some students may require referral to specialized health-care services.

For more information on a Review by the Minister, contact the Disputes Management Team Leader at 780–427–7235 or see Policy 3.5.1–Review by the Minister http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/educationguide/pol-plan/polregs/351.asp.

Most children with special needs are placed in regular classrooms in their neighbourhood or local schools, and are provided with programming, supports and services to meet their individual needs throughout the school day. There are a range of placement options possible; different children need different kinds of support. Deciding on the educational placement for an individual child is a collaborative process, and in most instances, parents and school staff agree on appropriate placements. If there is a disagreement, parents can appeal a decision at the district level. The school principal can provide information on the appeal procedure in your district. If parents do not agree with the decision of an appeal to the school board, they may write to the Minister of Learning and ask for a review of the board decision.

All students with identified special needs require an individualized program plan (IPP). An IPP is a plan of action with measurable goals. It shows what your child knows and what he or she can do. The IPP also explains what your child will be learning and how he or she will be learning. The IPP is a flexible tool that is updated regularly. Parents, school staff and the student need to work together as a learning team to ensure that the IPP is implemented.

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School staff will likely identify if your child is having learning difficulties and will have discussed with you what might be causing these difficulties. If you feel your child is having difficulty learning, you should talk to the classroom teacher to share knowledge about your child that could assist in determining the cause of these difficulties and in deciding if there are any small changes that can be made that would improve the situation. School-based staff can use a number of informal ways to identify learning needs. If it is apparent that school-based strategies are not enough, the teacher, in consultation with parents, will make a referral for a specialized assessment. Your child's teacher or the school principal will have information on the assessment procedures for your area.

The following resources provide additional information.

http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/k_12/curriculum/ParentResources.asp

http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/k_12/specialneeds/SpecialEd_stds2003.pdf

These resources are available for purchase from the Learning Resources Centre (LRC). Order online at http://www.lrc.learning.gov.ab.ca/.

- *The Learning Team: A Handbook for Parents of Children with Special Needs* (2003)—Information for parents of children with special needs
- *Standards for Special Education* (2002)—Information on the requirements for school boards regarding delivery of education programs and services to students with special needs in grades 1–12
- *A Handbook for Aboriginal Parents of Children with Special Needs* (2000)—Information for Aboriginal parents about rights and responsibilities regarding the education of their children with special needs
- *The Parent Advantage: Helping Children Become More Successful Learners at Home and School, Grades 1–9* (1998)—Strategies for teaching organizational, reading, writing, spelling, mathematical, test taking and project skills at the grades 1–9 levels
- *Make School Work for You: A Resource for Junior and Senior High Students Who Want to be More Successful Learners* (2001)—Information on knowing yourself, getting organized, making every class count, test taking, presenting learning, getting along with others and staying motivated

Distance and Online Learning

http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/ltb/ — The Learning Technologies Branch (LTB) develops course materials and learning objects for distance and online learning.

http://www.lrc.learning.gov.ab.ca — For information about purchasing distance learning print and CD materials, contact the Learning Resources Centre.

http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/ltb/400/courses.html — For a listing of all print distance learning courses available for purchase or study, visit the LTB Print Resources Web page.

http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/ltb/400/eproduct.html — To see the electronic products available, visit the Electronic Resources Web page.

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http://www.learnalberta.ca

LearnAlberta.ca provides exciting new online educational content to students, parents and teachers. Check out multimedia material for courses, such as Grade 6 Mathematics. Access the Online Reference Centre for a wide variety of research tools, such as encyclopedias, dictionaries and other reference works for all grade levels.

For information about registering in a distance learning course, contact a distance learning school, an online school, or your local school jurisdiction.

http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/french/M_12/default.asp

The French Language Services Branch develops distance learning courses for French language instruction. For courses available in French, contact the French Language Services Branch.

Assessment

Assessing Student Achievement

http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/k_12/testing/default.asp

In the classroom, a teacher uses a variety of means to assess students' learning throughout the school year. These assessments are based on the instruction being provided, in order to inform the teacher's planning from day to day. Classroom assessment may serve a diagnostic purpose, indicating students' strengths and weaknesses in specific skill areas. At other times it may be formative, indicating how well students have achieved in a unit of study or how well they have achieved to a particular point in the course. At the end of a school year, a teacher also assesses how well the students have achieved the expected learning outcomes in the curriculum for that grade. This summative type of assessment is designed primarily for reporting purposes. All these classroom assessments are integral to instruction, and they are complemented by the provincial achievement tests.

Provincial Achievement Tests

As well as being assessed by their teachers throughout the school year, students write provincial achievement tests at the end of grades 3, 6 and 9. Each achievement test provides a common measure for students across the province, based on the curriculum. The tests are designed to provide information about students' achievement in relation to provincial standards. This information is valuable to schools for review of programs and improvement of students' learning. As well, the information assists schools, school authorities and the province in reporting to parents and other Albertans on the achievement of students.

In Grade 3, students write achievement tests in English language arts and mathematics. Grade 3 students in French programs write the French form of the mathematics achievement test. Grade 6 and Grade 9 students write tests in language arts, mathematics, science and social studies. Grade 6 and Grade 9 students in French programs write both the English and the French language arts tests and the French forms of the other subject area achievement tests. Alberta Learning is also developing provincial achievement tests for the Grade 9 Integrated Occupational Program (IOP). The first provincewide administration of the IOP tests is planned for the 2005–2006 school year.

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The curriculum statements provided in the following pages serve as the basis for developing the achievement tests for the particular grade specified. Classroom teachers work with staff of Alberta Learning to develop questions for the tests, and these questions are field tested in classrooms across the province. Teachers also participate in standards setting and in the marking of the language arts tests. The involvement of teachers and the information gained from field testing help to ensure that the achievement tests are appropriate for the students and accurately reflect the grade-level curriculum.

Detailed reports are provided to schools and school authorities on the achievement test results of their students. These reports indicate the percentages of students achieving the provincial standards on each test, and they provide information about students' performance in particular areas of the curriculum. A school also receives an Individual Student Profile (ISP) of results for each student who wrote the achievement tests. The ISP shows the student's scores on the tests in relation to the provincial standards. Duplicate copies of the ISP sheets are provided to the schools for the students' parents.

Information about provincial achievement testing is provided in the *Parent Guide to Provincial Achievement Testing/Guide des parents Programme des tests de rendement provinciaux*. A separate parent guide is available for Grade 3, Grade 6, and Grade 9, and copies of the guides are available in schools across the province. Additional information about achievement testing is available on the Alberta Learning Web site. This includes sample tests, as well as summary results for the province and for individual schools and school authorities.

http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/k_12/testing.

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Overview of Grade 6

In Grade 6, students study required subject areas. Optional subject areas may be available at the local school. Students have access to 950 hours of instruction during a school year.

The Grade 6 Alberta program of studies for each subject area sets out general outcomes or topics that provide an overview of the important learnings students accomplish. Specific outcomes are included for each general outcome or topic and state in detail the knowledge, skills and attitudes students are working towards achieving.

This handbook contains:

- the general outcomes or topics for each subject area
- selected specific outcomes for most subject areas.

The programs of study, which include all the general and specific outcomes, are available on the Alberta Learning Web site or from the LRC.

Required Subject Areas. ***Students take:***						
English Language Arts	Mathematics	Science	Social Studies	Physical Education	Health and Life Skills	Art and Music
Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is integrated throughout English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies.						

Optional Subject Areas. ***Schools may offer:***	
Drama	Languages Other than English*

* Students in French immersion programs and bilingual programs in other languages take English language arts as well as language arts in the target language.

Students in immersion and bilingual programs also take a number of subjects in the target language.

New programs for the 2003–2004 school year:

- Ukrainian Language Arts

Programs under development:

- Cree Language and Culture
- French as a Second Language
- German Language Arts
- Italian Language and Culture
- Social Studies

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Required Subject Areas

The required subject areas are the foundation of the elementary program.

Required Subject Areas. ***Students take:***						
English Language Arts	Mathematics	Science	Social Studies	Physical Education	Health and Life Skills	Art and Music
Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is integrated throughout English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies.						

English Language Arts

View the English language arts subject page at http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/k_12/curriculum/bySubject/english/

The aim of the English language arts program is to enable students to understand and appreciate language, and to use it confidently and competently in a variety of situations for communication, personal satisfaction and learning.

From Kindergarten to Grade 12, students are developing knowledge, skills and attitudes in six language arts: Listening and Speaking; Reading and Writing; Viewing and Representing. Students learn to compose, comprehend and respond to oral, print and other media texts. They experience a variety of texts from many cultural traditions.

The following learning outcomes are selected from the Grade 6 English Language Arts Program of Studies.

Explore thoughts, ideas, feelings and experiences

- use prior experiences with oral, print and other media texts to choose new texts that meet learning needs and interests
- assess personal language use, and revise personal goals to enhance language learning and use
- select from the ideas and observations of others to expand personal understanding
- use talk, notes, personal writing and representing, together with texts and the ideas of others, to clarify and shape understanding

Comprehend and respond personally and critically to oral, print and other media texts

- combine personal experiences and the knowledge and skills gained through previous experiences with oral, print and other media texts to understand new ideas and information
- preview the content and structure of subject area texts, and use this information to set a purpose, rate and strategy for reading
- integrate and apply knowledge of phonics, sight vocabulary, language and context clues, and structural analysis to read unfamiliar words in texts of increasing length and complexity
- summarize oral, print or other media texts, indicating the connections among events, characters and settings
- discuss the connections among plot, setting and characters in oral, print and other media texts
- determine purpose and audience needs to choose forms, and organize ideas and details in oral, print and other media texts

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Manage ideas and information	• use note-taking or representing to assist with understanding ideas and information, and focusing topics for investigation • decide on and select the information needed to support a point of view • skim, scan and read closely to gather information • use outlines, thought webs and summaries to show the relationships among ideas and information and to clarify meaning • communicate ideas and information in a variety of oral, print and other media texts, such as multiparagraph reports, question and answer formats and graphs • establish goals for enhancing research skills
Enhance the clarity and artistry of communication	• revise to provide focus, expand relevant ideas and eliminate unnecessary information • write legibly and at a pace appropriate to context and purpose • experiment with a variety of software design elements, such as spacing, graphics, titles and headings, and font sizes and styles, to enhance the presentation of texts • use complex sentence structures and a variety of sentence types in own writing • edit for and correct commonly misspelled words in own writing, using spelling generalizations and the meaning and function of words in context • use various styles and forms of presentations, depending on content, audience and purpose • emphasize key ideas and information to enhance audience understanding and enjoyment • identify the tone, mood and emotion conveyed in oral and visual presentations
Respect, support and collaborate with others	• identify ways in which oral, print and other media texts from diverse cultures and communities explore similar ideas • demonstrate respect by choosing appropriate language and tone in oral, print and other media texts • assume a variety of roles, and share responsibilities as a group member • address specific problems in a group by specifying goals, devising alternative solutions and choosing the best alternative • assess own contributions to group process, and set personal goals for working effectively with others

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Required Subject Areas. *Students take:*						
English Language Arts	Mathematics	Science	Social Studies	Physical Education	Health and Life Skills	Art and Music
Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is integrated throughout English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies.						

Mathematics

View the mathematics subject page at http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/k_12/curriculum/bySubject/math/

View Mathematics, Grade 6 on the LearnAlberta.ca Web site at http://www.learnalberta.ca/Math/default.asp

The aim of the mathematics program is to prepare students to:

- use mathematics confidently to solve problems
- communicate and reason mathematically
- appreciate and value mathematics
- commit themselves to lifelong learning
- become mathematically literate adults, using mathematics to contribute to society.

Students learn to use the following mathematical processes:

- communicate mathematically
- connect mathematical ideas to everyday experiences and to other subject areas
- use estimation and mental mathematics where appropriate
- apply new mathematical knowledge to problem solving
- reason and justify their thinking
- use appropriate technologies
- use visualization to assist in problem solving, processing information and making connections.

The following learning outcomes are selected from the Grade 6 Mathematics Program of Studies.

Number

- develop a number sense for decimals and common fractions, explore integers, and show number sense for whole numbers
- apply arithmetic operations on whole numbers and decimals in solving problems

Patterns and Relations

- use relationships to summarize, generalize and extend patterns, including those found in music and art
- use informal and concrete representations of equality and operations on equality to solve problems

Shape and Space

- solve problems involving perimeter, area, surface area, volume and angle measurement
- use visualization and symmetry to solve problems involving classification and sketching
- create patterns and designs that incorporate symmetry, tessellations, translations and reflections

Statistics and Probability

- develop and implement a plan for the collection, display and analysis of data gathered from appropriate samples
- use numbers to communicate the probability of single events from experiments and models

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Required Subject Areas. *Students take:*						
English Language Arts	Mathematics	Science	Social Studies	Physical Education	Health and Life Skills	Art and Music
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Science

View the science subject page at http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/k_12/curriculum/bySubject/science/

View *The Thrill of Flight Resource* on the LearnAlberta.ca Web site at http://www.learnalberta.ca/ThrillOfFlight/default.asp

The aim of the science program is to encourage and stimulate children's learning by nurturing their sense of wonderment, by developing skill and confidence in investigating their surroundings, and by building a foundation of experience and understanding upon which later learning can be based. In elementary science, students develop their skills of inquiry and problem solving. They are also developing positive attitudes toward the study of science and the application of science in responsible ways.

The following learning outcomes are selected from the Grade 6 Science Program of Studies.

Air and Aerodynamics

- describe the properties of air and the interactions of air with objects in flight
- study birds and airplanes and learn a variety of adaptations and designs that make flight possible and provide for propulsion and control

Flight

- develop a basic design, build it, test it, and solve the problems that inevitably arise
- learn, through teamwork, that planning, communication, cooperation and flexibility are important to the overall result—even though parts of a task can be worked on individually

Sky Science

- move from a simple view of land and sky to one that recognizes Earth as a sphere in motion within a larger universe
- explore the topics of seasonal cycles, phases of the Moon, and the apparent motion of stars
- observe, describe and interpret the movement of objects in the sky; and identify pattern and order in these movements

Evidence and Investigation

- learn to pose questions, devise investigations, recognize patterns and discrepancies, and think logically about what they have observed
- apply observation and inference skills to recognize and interpret patterns and to distinguish a specific pattern from a group of similar patterns
- apply knowledge of the properties and interactions of materials to the investigation and identification of a material sample

Trees and Forests

- learn about a broad range of living things found on, under and around trees
- study the complex interaction between trees and the larger environment
- examine the human use of forests

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Required Subject Areas. *Students take:*						
English Language Arts	Mathematics	Science	Social Studies	Physical Education	Health and Life Skills	Art and Music
Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is integrated throughout English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies.						

Social Studies

View the social studies subject page at http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/k_12/curriculum/bySubject/social/

The aim of the social studies program is to help students develop the knowledge, skills and positive attitudes they need to be responsible citizens and contributing members of society. Students learn to acquire and evaluate information and ideas. They learn to interact with others and develop understanding and respect for people in their school, their family and their community.

The focus of the Grade 6 social studies program is meeting human needs. Students learn about how needs are met by the local, provincial and federal governments; how the government of an ancient civilization met the needs of its citizens; and how China—one of Canada's Pacific Rim neighbours—meets its citizens' needs.

The following learning outcomes are selected from the Grade 6 Social Studies Program of Studies.

Local Government

- understand that an individual has responsibilities and rights as a citizen that begin at the local level
- develop an understanding of the three levels of government
- understand how governments raise money to meet needs
- understand that democracy allows and needs people to take part in government
- understand differences between rights and responsibilities of citizens
- locate, on a map of Canada, boundaries of local, provincial and federal jurisdictions

Greece: An Ancient Civilization

- understand some of the ways in which physical, social and psychological needs are met, and how they have varied over time and from place to place
- learn how environment, beliefs and class structure affected how an individual's needs were met in ancient Greece
- understand that Greek values, beliefs and ideas have affected Western civilization
- select pertinent information by reading history books, myths, legends, historical maps and historical fiction

China: A Pacific Rim Nation

- understand that nations in the world are becoming increasingly interdependent and that the Pacific Rim is becoming increasingly important
- understand that sharing among countries can influence our lifestyle
- use an atlas to locate places in China and Canada
- compare and contrast the way people in China and Canada meet their needs

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Required Subject Areas. *Students take:*						
English Language Arts	Mathematics	Science	Social Studies	Physical Education	Health and Life Skills	Art and Music
Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is integrated throughout English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies.						

Information and Communication Technology (ICT)

View the information and communication technology subject page at http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/ict/outcomes/div1.asp

The ICT curriculum is not intended to stand alone as a course, but rather to be infused within English language arts, mathematics, science and social studies. Schools have until June 2003 to phase in the program. The outcomes are organized by divisions; Division 1 is Kindergarten to Grade 3.

Students learn about the nature of technology, how to use and apply a variety of technologies, and the importance of technology to self and society.

The following learning outcomes are selected from the Grade 4 to Grade 6 Information and Communication Technology Program of Studies.

Communicating, Inquiring, Decision Making and Problem Solving

- access and retrieve appropriate information from the Internet by using a specific search path or from given uniform resource locations (URLs)
- organize information gathered from the Internet, or an electronic source, by selecting and recording the data in logical files or categories
- organize information, using such tools as a database, spreadsheet or electronic webbing

Foundational Operations, Knowledge and Concepts

- examine the environmental issues related to the use of technology
- explain the advantages and limitations of using computers to store, organize, retrieve and select information
- work collaboratively to share limited resources
- identify and apply techniques and tools for communicating, storing, retrieving and selecting information

Processes for Productivity

- enter and manipulate data by using such tools as spreadsheets or databases for a specific purpose
- edit and format text to clarify and enhance meaning, using such word processing features as the thesaurus, find/change, text alignment, font size and font style
- convert digital text files by opening and saving them as different file types
- access available databases for images to support communication

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Required Subject Areas. *Students take:*						
English Language Arts	Mathematics	Science	Social Studies	Physical Education	Health and Life Skills	Art and Music
Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is integrated throughout English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies.						

Physical Education

View the physical education subject page at http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/k_12/curriculum/bySubject/physed/

The aim of the K–12 physical education program is to enable individuals to develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary to lead an active, healthy lifestyle. Students participate in a variety of physical activities: dance, games, types of gymnastics, individual activities and activities in alternative environments, such as aquatics and outdoor pursuits.

The following learning outcomes are selected from the Grade 6 Physical Education Program of Studies.

Activity

Basic Skills

- select, perform and refine challenging locomotor sequences

Application of Basic Skills

- select, perform and refine more challenging basic skills in a variety of environments and using various equipment; e.g., downhill skiing, hiking
- demonstrate a creative process to develop dance sequences alone and with others; and, demonstrate movement sequences in response to a variety of musical, verbal and visual stimuli
- demonstrate sport specific skills to create competitive and cooperative modified games that involve everyone
- demonstrate activity specific skills in a variety of individual activities; e.g., track and field/athletics

Benefits Health

Functional Fitness

- explain the relationship between nutritional habits and performance in physical activity
- explain the components of fitness; e.g., strength, endurance, flexibility, cardio-respiratory activities, and relate these to personal fitness level

Body Image

- acknowledge and accept individual differences in body shapes and how different body types contribute to positive involvement in physical activities

Well-being

- identify and plan for personal positive benefits from specific physical activity

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Cooperation

Communication
- identify and demonstrate respectful communication skills appropriate to various physical activities and that reflect feelings, ideas and experiences

Fair Play
- demonstrate etiquette and fair play

Leadership
- identify and then take responsibility for various roles while participating in physical activity; and, identify leadership and followership skills used while participating in physical education

Teamwork
- identify and demonstrate positive behaviours that show respect for self and others

Do It Daily ... for Life!

Effort
- demonstrate enjoyment of participation through extended effort in physical activity
- identify and demonstrate strategies that encourage participation and continued motivation

Safety
- participate in, and demonstrate the benefits of, safe warm-up and cool-down activities
- select simple, safe practices that promote an active, healthy lifestyle; e.g., rules of the road for cycling, inline skating

Goal Setting/Personal Challenge
- analyze and create different ways to achieve an activity goal that is personally challenging

Active Living in the Community
- examine factors that influence community decisions to support and promote physical activity
- choose and actively participate in a new group or individual activity that encourages daily participation

Exemptions from Physical Education

Exemptions from participation in physical education may be given for medical conditions, when accompanied by a medical certification from a doctor to the principal; for religious beliefs, when accompanied by a statement in writing from the parent to the principal; and where access to facilities is prohibitive. When exemption is granted, activities consistent with the program outcomes should be substituted where appropriate.

Physical Education Online

http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/physicaleducationonline

The Physical Education Online Web site provides a wealth of information to support student learning of the K–12 physical education program of studies. The site is organized into three major sections:
- Program of Studies
- Teacher Resources
- Home Education

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Required Subject Areas. *Students take:*						
English Language Arts	Mathematics	Science	Social Studies	Physical Education	Health and Life Skills	Art and Music
Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is integrated throughout English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies.						

Health and Life Skills

View the health and life skills subject page at http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/k_12/curriculum/bySubject/healthpls/

The aim of the health and life skills program is to enable students to make well-informed, healthy choices and to develop behaviours that contribute to the well-being of self and others. A comprehensive health program involves a partnership among home, school and community.

The following learning outcomes are selected from the Grade 6 Health and Life Skills Program of Studies.

Wellness Choices

Personal Health

- evaluate the need for balance and variety in daily activities that promote personal health; e.g., physical activity, relaxation, learning, sleep, reflection.
- identify and communicate values and beliefs that affect healthy choices

Safety and Responsibility

- analyze how laws, regulations and rules contribute to health and safety practices
- determine the health risks associated with the sharing of personal care items; e.g., articles of clothing, food/drinks, brushes, lip gloss

Relationship Choices

Understanding and Expressing Feelings

- recognize that individuals can choose their own emotional reactions to events and thoughts.
- develop personal strategies for dealing with stress/change; e.g., using humour, relaxation, physical activity

Interactions

- develop and demonstrate strategies to build and enhance relationships in the family; e.g., being honest, expressing empathy

Group Roles and Processes

- analyze the influence of groups, cliques and alliances on self and others; e.g., at home, in school, in the community

Life Learning Choices

Learning Strategies

- expand strategies for effective personal management; e.g., develop and implement a personal budget, assess the power of positive thinking

Life Roles and Career Development

- relate knowledge, skills and attitudes of a successful student to those of successful workers

Volunteerism

- identify the volunteer accomplishments of the community, and communicate information and appreciation

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Human Sexuality Education	Schools are required to offer human sexuality education in Grade 4 to Grade 9. Parents have the right to exempt their child from this instruction. Schools will provide alternative learning experiences for those students who have been exempted from human sexuality instruction.

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Required Subject Areas. *Students take:*						
English Language Arts	Mathematics	Science	Social Studies	Physical Education	Health and Life Skills	Art and Music
Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is integrated throughout English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies.						

Art and Music

View the fine arts subject page at http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/k_12/curriculum/bySubject/finearts/

Through art and music, students develop self-awareness and express their creativity in many ways. They respond personally and critically to a variety of art and music styles and forms.

Art

The aim of the art program is to enable students to learn visual arts skills and concepts, to interpret and communicate with visual symbols, to appreciate the cultural aspects of art, and to relate art to everyday life. The art curriculum has four major components: reflection, depiction, composition and expression.

The following learning outcomes are selected from the Grade 6 Art Program of Studies.

- study and analyze the individual character of natural objects or forms
- impose standards on designed objects and invent improved versions
- modify forms by abstraction, distortion and other transformations
- perfect images through economical use of material and efficiency of effort
- express a feeling or a message
- use media and techniques, with an emphasis on more indirect complex procedures and effects in drawing, painting, print making, sculpture, fabric arts, photography and computer graphics

Music

The aim of the music program is for students to develop an enjoyment of music, an understanding of a variety of music styles and an insight into music through a variety of musical activities. The music program is developed around the concepts of rhythm, melody, harmony, form and expression. These concepts are learned through participating in six skill areas: listening, moving, singing, playing instruments, reading and writing, and creating.

The following learning outcomes are selected from the Grade 6 Music Program of Studies.

- understand that there are many kinds of rhythm; e.g., ethnic rhythms, dance forms such as the waltz, tango
- understand that melodies may be based on other scales; e.g., ethnic, whole tone, atonal, chromatic, modal
- understand that longer forms of music, such as the concerto, opera and symphony, combine a variety of structural forms
- understand that the human voice has different timbral qualities
- recognize the sounds of electronic music
- sing songs written in a variety of scales
- understand the function of key signatures

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Optional Subject Areas

The range of optional subject areas offered by elementary schools varies from school to school depending on such factors as student and parent preferences, facilities and staffing.

Optional Subject Areas. ***Schools may offer:***	
Drama	Languages Other than English

Drama

View the drama subject page at http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/k_12/curriculum/bySubject/finearts/

The aim of the drama program is for students to develop a positive self-concept by assuming other roles and acquiring dramatic skills. Play, dramatic play and structured dramatic play are the foundation for dramatic forms of expression. These include dramatic movement, mime, choral speech, storytelling, dramatization, puppetry, choric drama, readers' theatre, story theatre, playmaking and group drama.

Drama may be taught as a separate subject area or integrated with other subjects.

Languages Other than English

A variety of courses and programs in languages other than English are available throughout Alberta. Some of these include Aboriginal languages, French, German and Ukrainian.

Students registered in an **immersion** or a **bilingual program** follow a language arts course in the target language (e.g., French, Ukrainian) in addition to studying English language arts. In these programs, the target language is also used as the language of instruction in other subject areas, such as mathematics, science and social studies.

Aboriginal Languages

http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/k_12/curriculum/bySubject/aborigin

Blackfoot and Cree language and culture programs are designed to enable students to learn Aboriginal languages and to increase awareness of Aboriginal cultures.

The following learning outcomes are selected from the Blackfoot and Cree Language and Culture Programs of Study.

- learn basic communication skills in Blackfoot or Cree
- develop cultural sensitivity, and enhance personal development
- develop a desire to extend or improve proficiency in the Blackfoot or Cree language

French Immersion Program

http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/quicklinks/seclang.asp

In Alberta, many students have the opportunity to study in a French immersion program. This program, designed for non-French speaking students, offers an effective way for students to become functionally fluent in French while achieving all of the learning outcomes of the regular programs of study. Graduates from French immersion programs achieve a level of fluency in the target language that allows them to pursue their post-secondary studies in French or to accept employment in a workplace where French is the main language of communication.

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There are many delivery models for French immersion present in Alberta schools:

- Early immersion—students begin their immersion experience in Kindergarten and continue in the program to Grade 12.
- Late immersion—the entry point is typically Grade 7.

Courses offered in the French language have as their basis a French version of the English program of studies, which is identical or comparable to the one used in the English program. The exception is Grade 1 to Grade 3 Social Studies. However, a program of studies specific to French immersion students was developed for the learning/teaching of French language arts. Some of the main French language arts learning outcomes are presented in the following section, French Language Arts.

http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/french/YYCHWE/Home.htm

A resource that may be helpful to parents is *Yes, You Can Help! Information and Inspiration for French Immersion Parents*. It is available on the Alberta Learning Web site or for purchase from the LRC.

French Language Arts

http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/french/FLA/default.asp

In Division 2, the French language arts program of studies is intended to continue work started in the earlier grades (Division 1), including vocabulary and syntax enrichment, to enable students to engage more actively in their environment. The program of studies also targets the development of the students' ability to plan and monitor their communication projects, whether they are working individually or with classroom partners. Students also learn to respect the basic rules of language in the oral discussions that take place in the classroom as well as in their writing projects.

The following learning outcomes are selected from the French Language Arts Program of Studies.

Oral Comprehension

- monitor their listening experiences to identify ways to overcome listening difficulties

Reading Comprehension

- identify appropriate strategies to overcome difficulties
- plan research projects more independently
- choose texts to meet needs and organize notes to retain information

Oral Production

- work independently and in groups to plan and organize presentations
- apply solutions for overcoming difficulties
- use appropriate tools to organize presentations

Writing

- write a few paragraphs to present and develop a given topic
- write stories describing more than one event
- select appropriate strategies to organize ideas (web or plan)
- use a variety of sentences and proper punctuation
- demonstrate agreement of nouns and adjectives in common, irregular forms

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French as a Second Language

http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/k_12/curriculum/bySubject/fsl

In Alberta, French as a Second Language (FSL) is a program in which the French language is taught as a subject, often between 20 and 40 minutes a day, to help students develop communication skills, language knowledge and cultural awareness in French.

Depending upon a school board's language policy, French as a second language may be offered as an optional program or it may be a compulsory program. School boards may begin the program at different grade levels, since the program is based on developing language proficiency over a grade or grades without being grade specific. Many schools start the program in Grade 4, but others may begin earlier or later.

The program is designed to teach students to:

- understand what they hear and read in French
- communicate their ideas orally and in written form, using an approach that is based on concrete and real-life experiences and situations
- acquire knowledge about local, provincial and national Francophone groups to become more aware of their presence and to understand them better
- develop French language vocabulary and grammar through thematic activities and projects that are related to real-life language experiences
- acquire specific language learning strategies that will help them become better second language learners.

The program is organized into three language proficiency levels—Beginning, Intermediate and Advanced. Each level has its own set of experiences. Students in elementary school generally focus on the Beginning level. As students work through this level, they develop their ability to understand and communicate in French.

http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/french/FSL/whatsnew/FSL_handbook/ab_public.htm

A resource that may be helpful to parents is *French as a Second Language (FSL) Program: A Guide for Parents*. It is available on the Alberta Learning Web site or for purchase from the LRC.

Ukrainian Language Arts

http://www.learning.gov.ab.ca/k_12/curriculum/bySubject/languages/default.asp

This course is designed as the Ukrainian language learning component for students in the Ukrainian bilingual program.

Students acquire knowledge, skills and attitudes in the areas of listening, speaking, reading, writing, viewing and representing. They learn to use Ukrainian confidently and competently in a variety of situations for communication, personal satisfaction and further learning. They are able to explore, understand and appreciate the Ukrainian culture for personal growth and satisfaction, and to participate in and contribute to an interdependent and multicultural global society.

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Other Languages

Many school boards have developed their own programs. Locally developed language programs include: Arabic, Chinese, Chipewyan, German, Hebrew, Italian, Polish and Spanish. These locally developed courses are based on local needs and demands, and may not always be available.

For more information on second language instruction offered in your area, please contact your local school board.

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Feedback Form

Curriculum Handbook for Parents 2003–2004: Grade 6

Please indicate whether you are a:

☐ Parent ☐ Teacher ☐ School Administrator ☐ District Administrator ☐ Other (please specify) _____

Please indicate whether you used:

☐ a print copy ☐ the online format ☐ both

Please respond to the following by placing a check mark under **Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Agree** or **Strongly Agree**.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. The handbook provides useful information.				
2. The amount of information is appropriate.				
3. The reading level is appropriate.				
4. The layout and organization are user-friendly.				
5. The links to the Alberta Learning Web site are helpful.				
6. Downloading and printing is easy.				

How can this handbook be made more helpful to parents?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Thank you for your feedback.

Please send your response to:

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